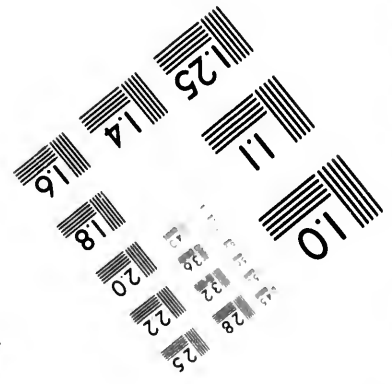
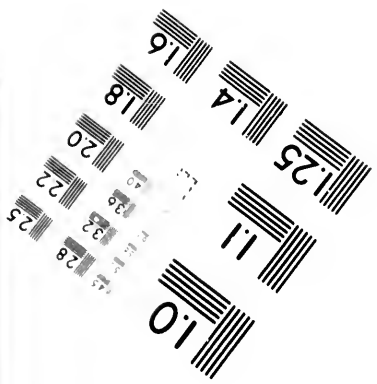
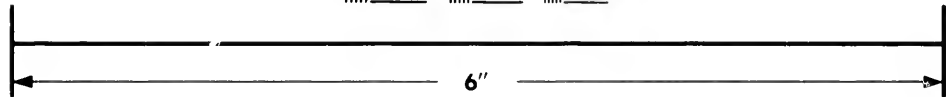
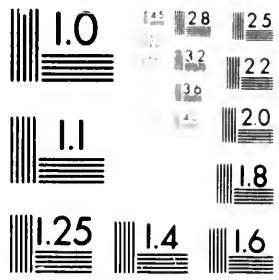


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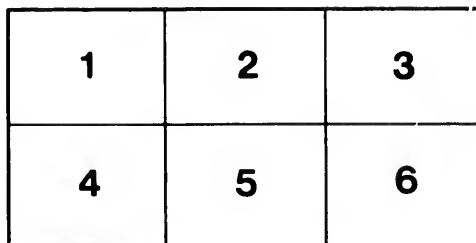
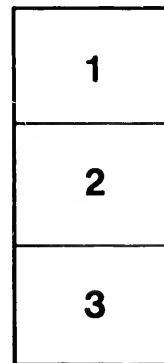
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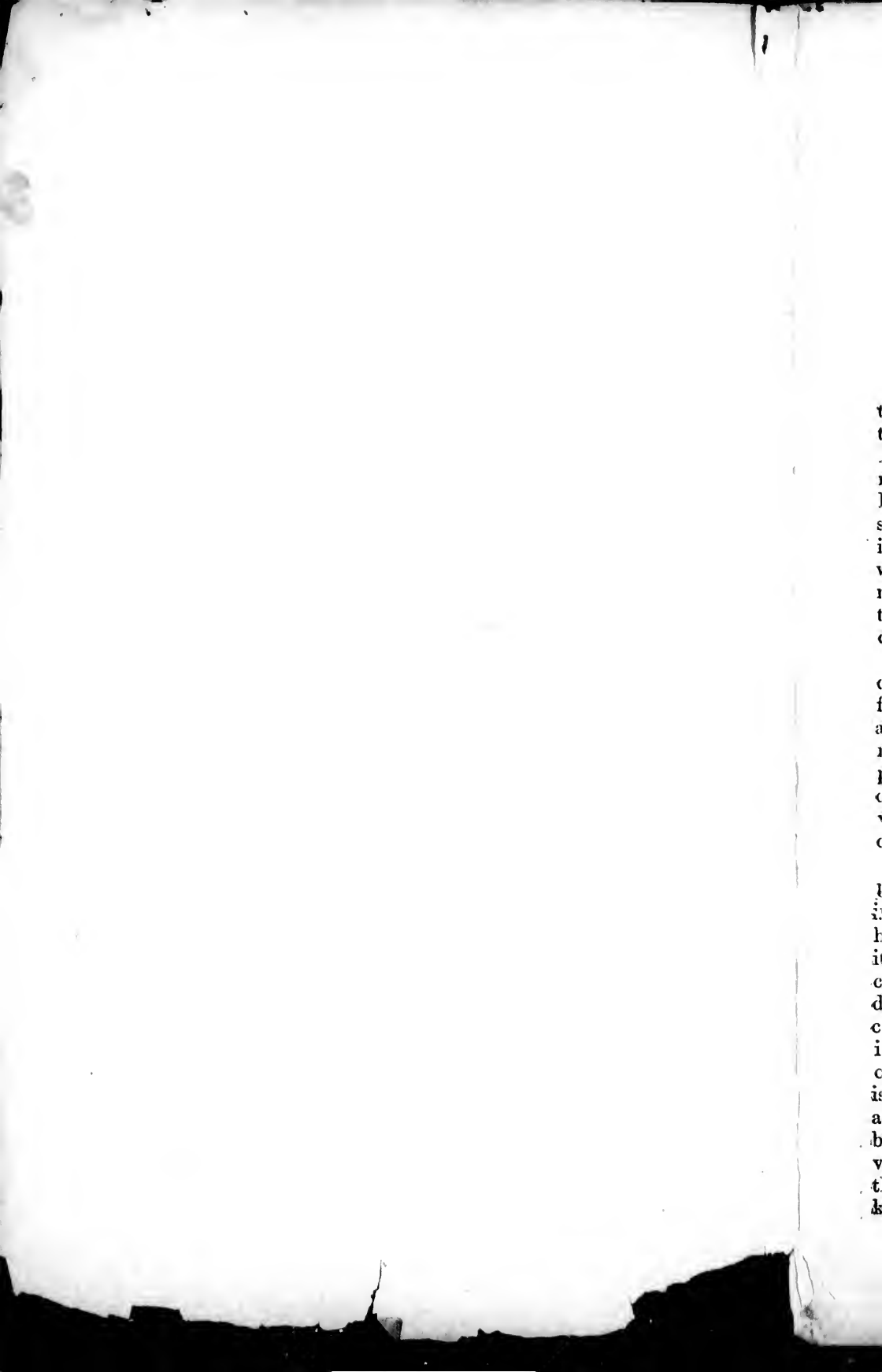
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**By J. G. BOURINOT.**  
*✓*

HALIFAX, N. S.

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1868.



# THE ACT OF CONFEDERATION

AND

## THE REPEAL MOVEMENT.

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IN the present article I shall endeavour to set briefly before the people of the Island of Cape Breton the advantages which they are likely to derive from the Confederation of British North America; and to show them the great and inevitable injuries they must sustain, if the movement for Repeal continues much longer. I shall not approach this question in a partizan spirit, but with a sincere desire to explain its real merits. A question of such grave importance should be treated dispassionately; and it is certainly very unfortunate for the best interests of this country that so much temper has been exhibited throughout the controversy, by those who are loudly clamoring for a repeal of the Union. No doubt it is difficult, for men who are the chief actors in this movement to divest themselves of every thing like passion and prejudice, and to approach the discussion of the measure with that frankness and impartiality which will best enable the masses to appreciate the actual position of affairs, and to come to those correct conclusions which are indispensable to the future peace, and prosperity of this Province. But the writer of this pamphlet is only a spectator of passing events, and has no other object in view except the benefit of those for whom his remarks are especially intended.

Now, a majority of the arguments that have been used in support of Confederation will necessarily apply to Cape Breton as an important and valuable section of the Dominion; but the question has never been taken up with especial reference to that island, and it is therefore important to see what advantages it is likely to receive under the new order of things. No portion of the Confederacy, it is well known, possesses greater capabilities for the creation of wealth than Cape Breton. Its coal fields are the richest in North America; it is on the very threshold of the finest fisheries of the world; its agricultural capabilities are excellent; and its coast is indented by numerous harbours, one of which—Louisburg,—is accessible at all seasons, and is situated on the very pathway of travel between the old world and the new. An island possessing such valuable resources, we should naturally expect would exhibit all the elements of prosperity. Unfortunately, however, those who know anything about Cape Breton, will not deny that no section of

the Confederacy has made less progress within the past half century than this very Island. Its towns are small, and exhibit a want of vitality and activity which clearly shows the sluggishness of the existing commerce. If it were not for the coal trade, in all probability matters would be in even a worse condition than they are now. The repeal of the mining monopoly, some years ago, led to the opening up of many coal mines, but, unhappily for the Island, the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty came to paralyze this trade and retard the development of one of the greatest resources of the country. At present the works are not conducted with anything like the activity that would exist under more auspicious circumstances. The fishermen, it is well known, are starving in some parts of the Island,—depending solely for relief on the charity which their countrymen can extend to them. All classes of the community, in fact, feel forcibly the pressure of “hard times.”

It is at this season of trial and adversity that the people of Cape Breton, in common with the rest of the Province, are called upon to take part in an agitation which, if persisted in, must lead to the most injurious results to all classes. It must be obvious that the prosperity of the Island depends on the opening up of new channels of trade, on the creation of new enterprises, and on the renewal of activity in all branches of commerce. This being the case, we naturally look about to see how it is possible to direct capital and enterprise into our midst. It requires no demonstration to show that the connection with a great country, which is the seat of activity and enterprise, must tend to the development of resources of so valuable a character as those possessed by Cape Breton. It is only necessary to consider the geographical situation of the Island to appreciate the advantages which must proceed sooner or later from the Union. It stands at the very entrance of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, the outlet of the great artery of Ontario and Quebec. More than a century ago the French recognized its value, and raised on its eastern shore one of their strongest fortresses, for the purpose of protecting their shipping engaged in the Canadian and West Indian trade. They were always ready to make many sacrifices in order to retain an island which was justly considered the very key to their American possessions. Nature, indeed, seems to have designed Cape Breton to be an emporium of the trade of the Great West. Let attention be once directed to its shores, capital and enterprise will flow in abundantly, and the island will at last assume its proper position among commercial and maritime communities. Its coal mines will present scenes of constant activity, and its ports will exhibit all the evidences of a busy commerce. No other section of the Dominion is more favourably situated for trade with Canada and the rest of the world, and yet there are men who would, at the mere demands of faction, prevent Cape Breton from realizing that destiny which the position nature has given, entitles her to achieve.



Canada is both an agricultural and manufacturing country, and it is to her Cape Breton must look for the great necessaries of life. The climate and soil of the island seem not to be adapted to the production of wheat and corn, even if there was land enough to raise the crops that will be required to sustain the large population that must eventually live within its limits. Canada will naturally look to us for the supply of coal she requires for domestic and manufacturing purposes. When the attention of capitalists has once been directed to the island, the fisheries must soon be carried on with the energy and enterprise which has been sadly wanting of late years. Our young men then will no longer go to man the Gloucester and Marblehead schooners, but will sail in vessels belonging to our own people. Establishments will start up in every place adapted for prosecuting the fisheries on a large scale. Already considerable interest is being taken in the island, and we may expect to a certainty that it will not be long hence before we shall see, in the introduction of capital and enterprise, one of the results of the recent political and commercial change which allies her so closely with the great communities of British North America. She will no longer be an isolated Island, tacked on to the little province of Nova Scotia, but will be a direct participant in all the advantages that must result from close connection with larger and wealthier countries. Would the small state of Massachusetts, or the still smaller state of Rhode Island, exhibit the evidences of great wealth and prosperity which they now do if they were isolated and unconnected with the whole system of American States? Isolated, they would in all likelihood make no more progress than Cape Breton; but from the moment they were connected with the great country to their rear, they sprang into bustling communities, and became the headquarters of an immense commerce.

The advantages that must result from close connection with the great communities of the West, ought to be obvious enough; but unfortunately a few specious issues have been raised by reckless politicians, for the purpose of misleading the masses. We hear it continually stated that the people are to be crushed by taxation, as one of the results of Union; and the existing Tariff is brought forward in illustration of this argument. It cannot be denied that the Tariff may be improved in some respects; but, taken as a whole, the burthens it imposes are not so great as those that we would have to bear, if we remained as formerly. The Railways, and other public improvements that have been made, or are in progress in Nova Scotia proper, have increased our liabilities very largely; and the light taxation which has hitherto sufficed to meet our wants, must necessarily give place to higher duties.

The connection with Nova Scotia has never been fraught with much advantage to Cape Breton. Its isolated position to the eastward has necessarily prevented it participating in the benefits of the

Railways, and other public works, which have been promoted of recent years on the peninsula. A few years ago the debt of the whole Province did not amount to more than four millions of dollars. Now, the construction of the Pictou Railway, the Annapolis Railway, and other public improvements, have brought up this debt to about \$9,000,000. Of this immense sum, the people of Cape Breton, who consume a great quantity of dutiable goods and contribute a large amount to the revenue, would have to pay a considerable proportion under any circumstances. Confederation, therefore, cannot alter the position of Cape Breton for the worse; on the contrary it is far better for her to bear these burthens, in connection with the whole Dominion, than as a mere appendage to a small Province like Nova Scotia. The enterprize and activity that must result from Confederation, will enable her easily to bear burthens which have been imposed upon her by the Legislature of Nova Scotia, for the promotion of public works from which she can derive very little benefit for a long time to come.

The present Tariff, it should be remembered, is merely temporary; and if the men who represent the Island at Ottawa but fairly state the particulars in which it may be improved, they will, doubtless, be heard favorably. Let any one, however, take up the Tariff and scan carefully its different items, and it will be seen how exceedingly unfair are the statements of the Anti-Unionists in the press or "on the stump." The duty on American flour and meal is after all a very insignificant affair, though it is made much use of in this crusade against the West. The duty on flour, it will be remembered, was imposed by our own Legislature two years ago, and the Canadians have not made any change in that particular. The duty on corn-meal was doubtless imposed without much reflection, and will be removed, if the proper representations are made at the ensuing session of the Dominion Parliament. But the great subject of complaint in Cape Breton is, that the Canadians have refused to impose a duty on American coal which now enters so largely into the consumption of Ontario. Most persons among us will admit that a certain amount of encouragement ought to be given to our coal under existing circumstances; but the question here occurs, whether the present is the proper time to impose such duties. It would not have been wise to have imposed this tax before we were in a position to supply the Canadians; but more than this, the measure might operate very prejudicially in the American Congress, where the question of reciprocal trade with these Provinces is about being considered. When the Dominion Parliament has again assembled, it will have been accurately ascertained whether the Americans are disposed to make more liberal arrangements with us, and it will then be time enough to impose the duty which is so anxiously desired by the people of Cape Breton. And here it may be added, that our coal is already commencing to find its way into Ontario and Quebec. Looking into our trade returns we will find that the quantity shipped last year to Montreal and Quebec was largely in excess of the export three years

ago to the same places. No doubt if a small amount of encouragement is afforded by the Dominion Parliament to the coal of this Province, in case the Americans refuse Reciprocity, the consumption in Canada will next year be much greater and will annually increase.

The old Province of Canada is already a manufacturing country, and must always consume a great quantity of coal in her mills and factories; and it is clearly for her interest to buy from those who are connected with her politically and commercially, and can furnish her with the necessary supply at the cheapest rates. But Nova Scotia herself, in the course of time, must foster a very extensive and valuable manufacturing industry. Her natural advantages for the creation of such an industry are very superior to those possessed by other sections of the Dominion; and it only requires the introduction of capital and enterprise to make her the Massachusetts of British America. Great Britain now finds in the Brazils, the West Indies and other parts of South America, the largest consumers of her manufactures; and though we can never expect to compete with her in the great staples of her commerce, yet there are many things which we can manufacture cheaply, and for which we can find a ready sale in those countries. The Americans have also annually shipped to the same countries, a large quantity of articles, consisting both of natural products and domestic manufactures, which the Confederation must be able, sooner or later, to export far more cheaply than the former people are likely to do for a long time to come. Situated on the Atlantic, possessing valuable coal mines and water facilities, Nova Scotia must outrun all those who compete with her as a manufacturing country on this continent. It requires little reflection, however, to show that if she should be isolated from the large population occupying the noble country on the St. Lawrence, and the great lakes, she could make little or no progress in manufactures. Let her, however, be closely connected with that large and growing country, and her resources must be rapidly developed and an important manufacturing industry gradually grow up on her shores. It is true Canada has the vantage-ground at present; but, as I have previously stated, with the natural facilities Nova Scotia possesses, she must eventually outstrip that country when once started in the race of competition. In the creation of this manufacturing industry in Nova Scotia, Cape Breton necessarily possesses the deepest interest, for it will be one great means of rapidly developing her mines, and increasing her wealth. Therefore, to isolate Nova Scotia from the rest of the Dominion, is to prevent her establishing a large system of manufactures, and at the same time circumscribes the development of her mineral resources.

Free trade with the United States in all articles of natural growth is a measure in which everybody in Cape Breton is more or less deeply interested. It is only necessary to travel through the island to see how much of its prosperity depends on the American trade. We see forcibly exemplified, the folly of any commu-

nity depending to a large extent upon a single country for its principal market. The trade that flows through many and diversified channels is the only one that is of real and substantial value. England, for years, drew all her cotton from the Southern States; but the civil war occurred, and, for a long time, one of the most important branches of British industry was entirely paralysed. Poverty and misery prevailed in her manufacturing districts, and the charitable men and women of Great Britain had to step forward and generously relieve the sufferers. The indomitable energy of British merchants and capitalists, however, asserted itself, and found new fields whence to draw the required supply of cotton. The war came finally to an end, and with it England's dependence on the Southern States for the great staple in question. So will it be with us. Nova Scotia has depended to a large extent upon the Americans for her trade. Her coal has found its principal market in the ports of the United States, and the moment the Reciprocity Treaty was repealed, and a duty imposed on foreign coal, this important branch of industry became paralysed, just as the cotton trade of England was affected by the stoppage of the Southern ports. Already in the course of two years, our coal trade has commenced to find new channels; and there is every reason to conclude that, eventually, it will be more independent of the United States.

But if the Reciprocity Treaty is so essential to our prosperity, as many persons in Cape Breton believe it to be, what is the best means of obtaining its renewal? None of us surely, should go crouching to the United States, imploring them to restore it! If it be said that the Canadians care little about the treaty, it may be replied that two years ago their government were so anxious to obtain its renewal that they offered, through their delegates in Washington, to make concessions which would be hardly palatable to the people of Nova Scotia. Our true policy is to wait patiently and show every disposition to meet the Americans half-way, whenever they awaken to reason; but not to go to them in the attitude of dependents or suppliants. But, if a new treaty is so very desirable, is the present policy of the Anti-Union party calculated to give it to us? Whatever may be the aim or desire of the most influential men in the Anti-Union party—and I do not pretend to doubt the sincerity and honesty of purpose of many of them—it cannot be concealed, that the belief is gaining ground very rapidly throughout the United States, that the tendency of the present Repeal, or Anti-Union movement, is to bring us into political connection with that country. Whilst this belief prevails, it is reasonable to assume that Congress will not exhibit any great desire to enter into closer commercial relations with a province which may form a portion of their own country before any great length of time elapses. American politicians see Nova Scotia agitated and riven asunder

by political differences ; whilst its public men and journals, commence to throw out hints about the advantages that Annexation possesses over Confederation. It is useless to argue that the Americans have territory enough, and that their statesmen are not anxious to make fresh acquisitions: the recent purchases by that Government at once give the contradiction to that assertion, and proves that the idea of having on this Continent "one Republic, great and indivisible," is rapidly gaining ground in the U. States.

A country so rich in minerals, possessed of such great capabilities, for carrying on the fisheries and all branches of trade, would be a magnificent prize to the United States, one far exceeding in importance the vast tract of country which has been lately purchased from the Russian Government. The Americans, therefore, look eagerly on, whilst faction is creating dissension among ourselves and the elements of difficulty with the Parent State. They hope that the result of this state of affairs will be that this fine Province will fall into their arms, like a ripe pear from its parent stem. The supporters of the Anti-Union party may indignantly scout the charge, that the course they are pursuing is so injurious to the best interests of Nova Scotia, but only let them continue as they have commenced, and the truth of the foregoing observations will soon become too apparent.

Every argument that the Anti-Union party have advanced against Union with Canada has been time and again refuted. Without reflecting how exceedingly unfair it is to speak of the advantages, or disadvantages of Union, until time has been allowed to test it, they endeavour constantly to create the impression that Nova Scotia is already suffering in a financial point of view from the measure. During the three weeks the House of Assembly was in session, almost every speaker brought forward any number of calculations to show the loss the Province must sustain from the Union. All these statements vary considerably from one another, and show the consummate folly of making calculations without having accurate materials at hand on which to base them. The Canadians, on the other hand, declared that the General Government have been obliged to pay out for the Province far more than they have received ; and this statement has never yet been fairly met.

It is certainly unfortunate, in some respects, that this Union should have come into operation at a time when great depression prevails among us, in all branches of business and industry. This stagnation in trade is not, however, confined to Nova Scotia, but has existed for some time, throughout Europe and America. Now, with characteristic unfairness, the Repealers would have the impression go abroad that this state of things in the Province has arisen in a great measure from Confederation, and it is only necessary to repeal it to bring back prosperity and activity in trade. Of course it is unnecessary to show any intelligent man the folly of such arguments ; but it cannot be denied that they are calculated to have some effect upon

very many persons in remote sections, who have little opportunity for enquiring into the actual state of the case. It is, undoubtedly, the repeal of the Reciprocity Treaty, taken in connection with dull times in England and the United States, and the failure of the fisheries, that has paralysed trade in this Province; and it is quite time enough to speak of the injurious effects of Confederation, when it has been two years at least in operation. But it may be justly asked—Is the policy of the Anti-Union party calculated to improve trade among us? On the contrary, as long as they keep up the present agitation, all branches of business must be more or less embarrassed.

If the condition of the local finances is as low as has been of late represented by the Government and their supporters, it is certainly due to the country that we had reliable data furnished to us. A commission has been engaged for some months in investigating our financial affairs, and it was certainly advisable that we had its report whilst the House was in session, particularly after the statement that appeared in the Speech with which the Legislature was opened; but the gentlemen who are conducting the Repeal movement do not seem very desirous of allowing the real facts of the case to come out too soon. Whatever the state of the local treasury may be, it is very clear that our system of government should be carried on with the utmost economy; but, so far, the Administration and the Legislature, have started on a most extravagant basis. Not a measure affecting the vital interests of the country has been passed in either branch of the Legislature. No less than eighteen or twenty most important bills, to incorporate new Gold and Coal Mining Companies were introduced, but the Government would not allow them to pass, to the great inconvenience and loss of capitalists who are awaiting their passage to carry on active operations. One of the most important interests of the country had therefore to suffer whilst days were wasted in useless debate. The Legislative Council met day after day but invariably adjourned, as it had no work whatever to do. The House of Assembly continued nearly a month in session, debating matters which ought to have been settled in a week—could members have been induced to attend to public business more than two or three hours a day, and to follow the example of the Canadian Parliament, which meets both night and day. The expenses of the session have been at the rate of about \$500 a day, just a waste of so much money which ought to be expended on our roads and bridges, The Government have gone on appointing public officials, delegations, and otherwise spending public money, just as if our system had not been simplified, and we still required all the machinery which was necessary before a large amount of public business was transferred to the General Government and Parliament. Let the people of Cape Breton, and every other section of Nova Scotia, weigh these significant facts carefully.

It is only necessary to look at the resolutions recently introduced into the House of Assembly, to see the puerility of the arguments on which the Anti-Unionists depend for success. From the beginning to

the end, we cannot see a single clause indicating statesmanlike vigour and breadth of view. It is difficult to understand how any set of men, possessed of ordinary intelligence, can presume to approach Her Majesty and her Government, with a document exhibiting throughout such extraordinary ignorance of the true principles on which our constitution is based. If the doctrines enunciated were correct, Nova Scotia could not be merely a colonial dependency, for the power of the Colonial Legislature and of the Imperial Parliament to change our constitution, and to pass the Act of Union, is denied to all intents and purposes. More than that, no measure of any importance touching our constitution: a Franchise Act for instance, could become law, without having been first submitted to the people, according to the principle laid down by these wonderful logicians and constitutionalists. A measure passed by the Colonial and Imperial Parliaments, and warmly approved by our Most Gracious Sovereign, is declared to be "a fraud and imposition" upon the people of this country. It is broadly asserted that our rights and interests have been disregarded by the Act of Union. From the very commencement of this great controversy similar statements have been made, but on no occasion has a better scheme of Union been brought forward or the disadvantages of the present measure clearly and specifically stated.

Mr. Wilkins has raked up from the archives of the Province, a musty old Charter given to Lord Cornwallis more than a century ago, and has declared that it is irrevocable. It is needless to tell any person at all conversant with our political history, that the constitution of this country has been changed time and again during the past century by the British Government, and by the Legislature of this Province. The old Charter has long since become a dead letter, fortunately for the rights and privileges of the people of this country, We now enjoy Responsible Government, by which the people, through their representatives, manage and direct the affairs of the country. If we should enforce that musty charter of former times we would have to go back to the old Council with all its abuses. If it be urged that the people have been deprived of their rights, and that their constitution has been destroyed by the Act of Union, then it can be forcibly replied that their constitutional privileges have only been enlarged. Our sphere of action has been widely extended by the union with our Sister Colonies on this Continent. We have a representation in the General Parliament, based on the population of the Province—the only basis on which a representation in America can properly rest—and can exercise much influence and power. References have been made time and again to the old Stamp Act that excited the Old Colonies so deeply, and an analogy has been drawn between it and the measure uniting the Provinces. When we see men of high ability like the Attorney General constantly drawing this analogy, no one need be surprised that the people have been so egregiously deceived in



connection with this question. The old Colonies did not complain of the burthen that the tax would impose upon them—for that was insignificant—but they remonstrated against its imposition on the ground that it was passed by a Parliament where they had no representation. But in the case of Nova Scotia, she is fully represented in the Parliament of Ottawa, and no tax or duty can be imposed upon her in connection with the rest of the Dominion without the knowledge of her representatives.

Passing by many points which must strike everybody who reads a series of resolutions affording such abundant material for unfavorable criticism, I would direct particular attention to one very remarkable paragraph. Instead of approaching Her Majesty with the deference and respect which become loyal British Colonists they use language which can bear no other construction than that of a menace. They declare that “unless the Quebec scheme be withdrawn, DISASTROUS CONSEQUENCES WILL FOLLOW.” According to the writer of this document the people are determined “not to be subjected to the dominion of any other power except that of Great Britain.” If it was a question of annexing this country to the United States we might understand this last statement, but Canada is a loyal dependency of the Crown, animated by the same sympathy and attachment for Great Britain and her institutions that prevail in this Province. Yet in the face of this fact we are told that Nova Scotia is subjected to the dominion of a foreign power. A cause that requires arguments of this kind to sustain it must be rotten indeed.

It is to the insidious character of the Address that I would especially direct the attention of every loyal subject of Her Majesty. Is it an evidence of patriotism and loyalty to approach our Sovereign with a threat on one's lips, that “most disastrous consequences will ensue” unless she at once accedes to the hasty appeal of a *single branch* of the Legislature, elected on a variety of issues at a time when public opinion had been misled by unscrupulous agitators. But what are “the disastrous consequences” that are foreshadowed? The result of the approaching appeal to the Imperial Government must be obvious to most persons who look at the question reasonably and calmly. British statesmen can only reply that they see no reasons given why they should interfere arbitrarily with an Imperial Statute passed after much deliberation;—that time must be given to work out the measure in British America. When this answer has been given by the Imperial Government, what course will the Anti-Union party pursue? Will they continue to agitate this country, and endeavour to excite the people to that degree that “disastrous consequences will ensue,” and the connection with the parent state be endangered? Then will those who are in their heart of hearts Annexationists at last openly avow their principles, and look to Washington for the assistance required to rid them of the connection with their sister provinces.



It may suit the Anti-Union leaders just now to keep out of sight the legitimate consequences of their policy, but it is nevertheless as clear as the sun at noon-day, that their success will be the isolation of this province from the rest of British America, and the rupture of its connection with the parent state. How can men be so blind as not to see the folly of the course they are pursuing? Nova Scotia cannot be permitted to remain separated from her sister colonies. A British American Union, without the Atlantic frontage that Nova Scotia gives it, must be a failure. Nova Scotia and Cape Breton are the very keys to the old province of Canada. The statesmen of Great Britain feel this, and are not prepared to jeopardize the future of these provinces because a few politicians have raised fallacious issues and deceived the people of this country.

Mr. Howe has on several public occasions shown us that the fortunes of Canada and Nova Scotia, are indissolubly bound up together;—that if Halifax or Quebec should fall, British America would be lost to a certainty. Mr. Wilkins recently, in the House of Assembly, also alluded to the great loss Great Britain would sustain if the United States should ever gain possession of this Maritime Colony. “Nova Scotia,” he said, “stands on the front of the American Continent, just as England does on that of Europe. She possesses great mineral wealth, the source of England’s greatness. Her coal and iron, with the energy of her people, have brought the mother country to her present high condition. We possess the same advantages—we too are almost an island. If Nova Scotia were lost to England, she might bid adieu to New Brunswick, to Prince Edward Island, and to Newfoundland. Let England transfer this little province to the United States, and she will, after a few years’ time, wake up to the loss she has sustained. If the people of the United States succeed in restoring the union, in healing the differences between the North and the South, and in concentrating their tremendous energies, she must become one of the greatest powers of the world. She is now a great naval power, but give her the harbour of Halifax,—which in her hands could be made just as impregnable as Gibraltar,—give her the coal, iron, and fisheries of Nova Scotia, and her power will be largely increased, and millions of people will pour into this country. The fisheries alone of these provinces would be to the United States a nursery for a million or a million and a half of seamen. How long would England then boast of her maritime supremacy?” Yet Mr. Wilkins would isolate Nova Scotia from the rest of British America, perpetuate sectional jealousies and rivalries between the provinces, and leave them to fall, one after the other, into the ranks of the American Republic.

Read the latest manifesto of the Anti-Union party in connection with the articles that constantly appear in their papers and the declarations recently made by Mr. Howe, and we will immediately see the

direction which the Repeal movement is taking. Mr. Howe, in his latest Temperance Hall speech, boldly stated that "*peace and order must be maintained during the next three or four months whilst the trial is being made, and the old flag must be respected until we have received our answer.*" There is no mistaking the meaning of words like these. Disastrous consequences will ensue and the old flag will no longer be respected, if the appeal of these gentlemen to the Imperial Government is not immediately answered as they wish. There is no winking the real issue out of sight. Talk with leading supporters of the Anti-Union party on the streets, in the Club, or in the Hotels, and you hear them boldly declare that their attachment to England and her institutions will be diminished, and consequences of a most disastrous character will in all likelihood follow, unless they receive a favorable response to the application they have made for repeal. But this is not all. Read the speeches delivered during the recent debate on the Repeal resolutions, and mark how frequently the several speakers refer to the consequences that will result if the British Government refuses to grant the request for a severance of the Union. One speaker, Mr. Cochran, a member of the Executive, did not hesitate to declare that "*peace and order will leave Nova Scotia,*" and several others had to be called to order by the Speaker on account of their bold allusions to Annexation. The most startling and extraordinary statement was made by the gentleman occupying the high and responsible position of the Attorney General of this province. He did not hesitate, in his closing speech on the resolutions, to declare solemnly the policy of himself and his government—for it must be assumed that he speaks authoritatively on this question—in case their efforts to obtain a repeal of the Union are unsuccessful. "*If the Queen,*" he said, refused to grant their petition, "*then Nova Scotia will be absolved from her allegiance to Great Britain—then Her Majesty has abdicated her authority over us. Then we must become a Republic—we will call upon the United States to guarantee the liberty of the finest people on earth, even if they are few in number.*" These are the words which the writer heard fall from Mr. Wilkins' lips in the Assembly Chamber of the Legislature. Let every loyal man reflect seriously on language like this—Her Majesty's Attorney General in this province approaches his Sovereign with a menace on his lips, that unless she at once accedes to his request, Nova Scotia will withdraw her allegiance from the British Empire. We are to have a republic indeed! The United States are to be asked to guarantee us their protection! Will not American statesmen reply immediately, if Nova Scotia requires their protection she must come into the American Union. Such language is ominous indeed. Her Majesty's Attorney General must surely forget the position he occupies, and the principles which his ancestors maintained like brave men

Many coarse allusions have been made to the last House of Assembly by certain persons in the new Legislature calling themselves representatives of the people. The late House at all events was composed of men whose proudest boast was that they endeavored, as far as lay in their power, to strengthen the connection between the Province and Great Britain; that they did not sow the elements of discord and disaffection among the people of this colony. Let the members of the present House assert what they may, the men who preceded them reflected credit on a body which is now shorn most sadly of its intellect and its dignity, and must in future times, when the passions and prejudices of the present have passed away, receive that honour and consideration to which they are justly entitled for their patriotism and loyalty in a most trying and important crisis of their country's history.

It is time, then, for every loyal man to ask himself seriously whether he is prepared to support a policy of so dangerous a tendency as that proclaimed by the Anti-Unionists. I now address myself particularly to the loyal people of the island, from whom the leaders of the Repeal movement demand sympathy and support. The larger proportion of the population of Cape Breton owe their origin to the Highlands of Scotland; and though many years have passed since they last saw the purple hills and breathed the air of their native land, yet its history and traditions are as dear to them as ever. Not a few of the inhabitants of the island are proud of their descent from those loyal and patriotic men who stood faithful to their king and country a century ago. Who dare assert that these sons of Scotland, or these descendants of American loyalists, will now forget their fealty to their Queen and country, and seek shelter beneath the folds of the Stars and Stripes? From the beautiful valley of the Mabou, from the hamlets on the shores of the Bras D'Or, from every town and village of the Island, will proceed a burst of the deepest indignation if this Anti-Union party should dare come forward and assert a policy of Annexation. The people of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton will not forswear their Sovereign and throw themselves into the arms of a country which is now torn by strife and discord, and overwhelmed by a load of taxation which its citizens find most grievous to bear.

This is not the time for agitation in British America. When we look at the present state of relations between England and the United States, it is impossible to avoid coming to the conclusion that it will require all the wisdom and forbearance of British statesmen to prevent a rupture with the great Republic of the West. The Americans appear determined upon pressing the claims they have set up in connection with the *Alabama* and other matters arising out of the recent civil war. Only the other day we heard of Congress voting a large sum of money for the relief of

those misguided men who have been acting the part of incendiaries throughout England and Ireland. England has already exhibited an amount of patience and conciliation towards the American Republic which she never would have shown a century ago to any power in Europe, but the time has come when she cannot consent to suffer her dignity and prestige to be further trampled upon by the mad Democracy of the West.

A few months ago Mr. Howe told the people of England in one of his public letters,\* "that in the United States we find our most formidable commercial rival, and, as matters stand, *our least reliable friend and ally*" and that "in the present temper of the Republic we have no security for peace." What he wrote then has a peculiar significance now. It is only too true that, as things are now in the United States, "we have no security for peace." Is this then the time to create disaffection among the people of this dependency, and to avert their sympathies from the great Empire to which we owe so much? Let every man who supports Mr. Howe and his party then weigh well the consequences of their present policy, if he is desirous of acting the part of a loyal subject of the British Crown.

The statesmanlike policy for men sincerely anxious for the promotion of the public welfare would be, not to keep this country in a constant state of agitation and turmoil, but to point out in what respects they think the Union Act is defective and to make an effort to remove those defects. If they approach the British Government in a temperate and dignified manner, and can prove that the scheme actually bears hardly upon this Province, then their attitude will be different to what it is now. If the Act is so injurious to the best interests of this country it is of course very easy to prove it to the satisfaction of the Imperial Government and Parliament. So far, however, we have had nothing but the broadest denunciations of the measure and its promoters, and very little said or written about its merits. Is it because the measure is so perfect that these gentlemen cannot discuss and criticise it fairly, but raise false and delusive issues, for the purpose of isolating Nova Scotia from the rest of British America, and in all probability from the mother country? It is well known that this scheme has been discussed by the ablest minds of Great Britain and her dependencies on this side of the Atlantic, and has received their warm approval; but, nevertheless, it may contain very many defects which the remarkable constitutionalists connected with the local government can clearly point out to the Imperial authorities. History often repeats itself. Towards the close of last century the American States found it necessary to revise their constitution, and pass a measure which might give them greater homogeneity and power of acting in concert with one another. Then

\* The Organization of the Empire. London. 1866;

there came forward men to oppose the measure and to declare that it would be most injurious to the best interests of the several States they represented. Just such arguments as we hear now were urged upon the people, and were successfully met by able constitutional authorities like Hamilton. The little state of Rhode Island refused to enter into the Union on the terms of the new constitution, but how long did she continue her attitude of opposition? Would she now be willing to leave the ranks of the States, and become an isolated community, without free trade or close political connection with the American Union? No, her wealth and prosperity are the fruits of this close connection, and the man who would now advocate isolation would be deemed a mad man. Perhaps, in after times, when the historian comes to write the history of the rise and progress of the British American Confederation, he will express his surprise, as he sees the prosperity and wealth of this country, that men could ever have been so forgetful of the public interests as to attempt to isolate Nova Scotia from the rest of the Provinces, and mar the fortunes of the "New Dominion."

Let that large body of intelligent and independent men, who form so large a proportion of the community, reflect calmly and dispassionately on the present critical position of affairs in this country; I would request these men to ask themselves whether the course that Mr. Howe and his friends are pursuing is not extremely prejudicial to the public peace. Those who are acquainted with the past politics of this country know well it is out of the question to expect moderation in Mr. Howe. His abilities as a public writer and speaker will be acknowledged on all sides, but unfortunately for his own reputation, and the welfare of his country, these abilities are too often misdirected. Too frequently carried away by his personal feelings and ambitious impulses, he is wanting in the true attributes of a statesman. Throughout his public career we see him constantly exhibiting the characteristics of a demagogue—of that class of politicians who will make every effort to excite public clamour that they may succeed in carrying out certain ambitious projects. Having behind him, as he believes, the support of the masses, he is prepared to rush into extreme measures at the first favorable opportunity. That there are many men connected with him, in the Repeal movement who honestly believe that they are serving the public interests, by their present course of proceeding, nobody can deny for an instant. These men would hardly lend themselves knowingly to any project which would tend to sever the connection between the Crown and this Colony, but they know that those who sow the wind need not be surprised if they reap the whirlwind. Their intentions may be still perfectly loyal and honourable, but having embarked once on the stream of faction and demagoguism, they may be carried far from shore, into the open sea of tumult and disorder, and find it impossible to re-

turn to the peaceful haven which they have left, in a moment of rashness, at the persuasion of men more cunning and unscrupulous than themselves.

It is useless referring to the past. Mistakes have been doubtless committed in connection with the measure of Confederation in this country; but it is with the present we have to deal.

"Let the dead bury its dead."

The great mistake, undoubtedly, was in not submitting the question to the people at the outset. If this had been done, a great deal of the excitement and difficulty might have been prevented. Of the constitutionality of the course pursued by the Legislature there ought to be no doubt; but very many friends of the Union have always felt that the true policy was to have submitted the measure to the polls, since it was one of no ordinary interest, but one affecting every man, woman and child in the country for generations to come. Those, however, who contend that the measure of Union is absolutely necessary to the prosperity and security of British America, justly argue that it would be worse than suicidal to go back to the old state of isolation, and thereby mar the destinies of all British America. No possible good, but much evil, may arise from the Repeal movement, as it has been attempted to be shewn in the preceding pages.

Union is now inevitable. As well might men endeavour to stay the tides that flow with such irresistible force in the Bay of Fundy as expect to stem the current that is bearing these Provinces onward to a great destiny in the future. That man must be mean-spirited indeed, who would allow this Province to continue an isolated community and not unite its fortunes with those of the rest of British America. All the Provinces are united to one another by the ties of a common attachment to one Sovereign. In the history and literature of England they ever find the deepest pleasure and delight. Within the limits of the Confederation can be found all the elements necessary to make a community great and prosperous. Yet because individuals fancy they have been deprived of some of their rights, the Provinces of British North America must ever be kept isolated from each other, and refused the privilege of working out their future as one Confederacy, animated from one end to the other by feelings of affection and veneration for the great State to which it owes its origin.

Cape Breton has a noble future before it, as a valuable portion of the New Dominion. It requires very little argument to show that intimate political and commercial connection with all the large and prosperous communities of British America, must possess very superior advantages over the connection with the little peninsula of Nova Scotia. Under Union she must have a direct interest in the affairs of nearly four millions of people, occupying a large area of

country, rich in resources of every kind, and must participate in the prosperity that will proceed from the improved state of things. Repeal the Union, and Cape Breton passes once more into the condition of an appendage to a province which, left to itself, can never progress beyond a certain limit, nor afford that wider field that will satisfy the legitimate ambition of her sons. Rely upon it, the gloom that at present settles on the Island will soon disappear beneath the reviving influence of this Union. And let it not be forgotten that no country can ever be rich and prosperous when it is constantly subject to agitation or disorder. The excitement that is now so industriously encouraged by a large party in this province, must not only derange and paralyze trade, but may lead, as it has been previously intimated, to consequences of a far more injurious character. Cape Breton certainly can derive no benefit from assisting those who are desirous of keeping up this agitation; but she has every thing to gain from the introduction of new capital, and the establishment of new enterprises, which must surely follow from the peaceful development of the New Dominion. It is the duty as well as the interest of her people to strengthen in every way they can the hands of those who are endeavoring to establish the Union on firm foundations, and not to lend themselves to the designs of agitators, whose success would have the most disastrous effect upon the future of British North America.

HALIFAX, 29th. February, 1868.

